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REPORT

OF THE

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

OF

First Church of Christ, Scientist,

OF

NEW YORK CITY

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NOVEMBER 4, 1909

REPORT

OF THE

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

OF

First Church of Christ, Scientist,

OF

NEW YORK CITY.

Containing that portion of said Report which was both read and approved at the Special Meeting, of Church Members and Regular Attendants, held in the Church Edifice, 1 West 96th Street, New York City, on Thursday, November 4, 1909, at two o'clock in the afternoon.

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INTRODUCTION.

In the hope of removing whatever obstacles may lie in the way of the return of this church to the enjoyment of that peace and growth which belong to the children of God, the Board of Trustees beg leave to submit the results of their inquiry to you, after more than a month of tireless labor in arriving at the facts and conclusions which are herewith set forth.

During the last week of September, 1909, all the members of the Board of Trustees, of First Church of Christ, Scientist, New York City, except Mrs. Augusta E. Stetson, were requested to confer with the Board of Directors of The Mother Church, on September 24th, at Boston.

Mr. Edwin F. Hatfield and Mrs. Isabelle C. Dam were unavoidably prevented from complying with the request. All the other members of the Board of Trustees of this branch church, who had been invited, appeared at the time appointed, and were received informally by the Board of Directors of The Mother Church. They found three other persons present, besides a stenographer; namely, Judge Clifford P. Smith, First Reader of The Mother Church; Mr. Virgil O. Strickler, and Miss Ella G. Young, First and Second Readers, respectively, of this branch church. It was stated, among other things, by Mr. Archibald McLellan, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Mother Church;

1. That the Trustees of this branch church then present at Boston had been invited to the conference not in an official capacity, but as individuals;

2. That an investigation was in progress at Boston, and "was instituted because of the widespread impression obtained by all Christian Scientists throughout the Field, that there is something wrong with the teachings and

practices in First Church of Christ, Scientist, New York City, and that these teachings and practices differ materially from those which obtain in other places ;"

3. That no charge nor complaint was then pending against any particular person.

A synopsis of the testimony, said to be before the Directors at that time, was then given orally to the Trustees of this branch church there present, by Judge Clifford P. Smith, First Reader of The Mother Church, on behalf and by request of the Board of Directors of The Mother Church. The Synopsis contained allegations of a very grave character. A copy of the entire evidence was therefore requested by the Trustees who were present, for the use of the Board of Trustees of this branch Church. This request was not granted.

Two days after this conference, the Acting Clerk of this branch church received the following letter from Mrs. Stetson:

7 West 96th St.
New York, September 26, 1909.

Dr. John Franklin Crowell, Acting Clerk, First Church of Christ, Scientist, New York City:

Dear Dr. Crowell—To-day I received a letter signed "J. V. Dittemore, Secretary," containing enclosures which purport to be copies of findings and orders by the Board of Directors of The First Church of Christ, Scientist, in Boston Mass.

As a member of the Board of Trustees of First Church of Christ, Scientist, New York City, I request that you call a meeting of that

Board at the earliest possible time, in order that the documents referred to may be laid before the Board for such action as may be proper.

Faithfully yours,

(*Signed*) *AUGUSTA E. STETSON.*

This request was complied with, and a meeting of the Board was held on October 1st 1909. Mr. Strickler and Miss Young were present, in addition to every member of the Board except Mrs. Augusta E. Stetson. At that meeting the following documents were laid before the Board of Trustees:

September 28, 1909.

To the Board of Trustees, First Church of Christ Scientist, New York City:

I hand you herewith a letter, and the enclosures therein referred to, dated Boston, Mass., Sept. 25, 1909, and purporting to be written on behalf of the Christian Science Board of Directors. About six weeks ago I was advised by those Directors that a charge then pending against me had been dismissed. Since which time I have had no direct communication from them, until the documents herewith handed you were received by registered mail on Sunday morning, Sept. 26, 1909, I immediately requested that a meeting of our Board be called to hear these documents read, and to take such action as may be proper. As the matter affects me individually, in a way that may make my presence undesirable, if not improper, I am absenting myself from the meeting.

I rest in the firm conviction that our Father-Mother God will guide your every action—even that divine Mind which is now manifested in

glory in our beloved Leader, Mary Baker Eddy, through whom I became acquainted with her God—Life, Truth and Love. This God I have endeavored to present and to represent to you, even as I have heard and seen while following my forever Leader, Mary Baker Eddy.

Let nothing separate you from divine Principle or from your Leader, Mary Baker Eddy, who will bring us all into the kingdom of our God and His Christ; "But every man in his own order; Christ the first-fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming." (1 *Cor.* 15:23).

(*Signed*) *AUGUSTA E. STETSON, C. S. D.*

THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
THE FIRST CHURCH OF CHRIST, SCIENTIST,
NORWAY, FALMOUTH & ST. PAUL STS.
BOSTON, MASS.

Office of the Secretary

September 25, 1909.

Mrs. Augusta E. Stetson, 7 West 96th Street, New York, N. Y.:

Dear Mrs. Stetson—By order of the Board of Directors I am sending you herewith a copy of the findings and orders concerning yourself this day made by them.

The copy of their action is sent you in order to inform you thereof and in order to admonish you concerning the errors on your part therein pointed out.

The Board directs me to express the hope that you will accept this admonition and desist from a repetition of the errors which they have pointed out.

Very sincerely,

(*Signed*) *J. V. DITTEMORE,*

Secretary for the Christian Science Board of Directors.

Saturday, Sept. 25th 1909

"The Board of Directors of The First Church of Christ, Scientist, in Boston, Mass., met pursuant to their adjournment of yesterday. Present; all of the Directors.

"The Directors took up and considered the case of Mrs. Augusta E. Stetson, a member of this Church and an authorized teacher of Christian Science, as presented by her statements recently made before the Directors and the testimony of twenty-five witnesses whose examination was concluded yesterday; namely,

Richard P. Verrall
Miss Marion Stephens
Arnold Blome
Miss Sarah Hathaway
Miss Jessie Colton
Mrs. Kate Remer
Mrs. Margaret Beecher White
Mrs. Mary Freshman
Mrs. Amelia Rowbotham
Steuart C. Rowbotham
Miss Ella Young
Miss Sibyl Huse
V. O. Strickler
Mrs. A. Aikman
Hayne Davis
Harry Fink
Miss Margaret Duncan
Miss A. E. Ensworth
Miss Ida Pope
Arthur Overbury
Miss Mary Pearson
Mrs. Anna Holden
Mrs. Letitia Greene
Miss Mary Pinney
Mrs. Catherine B. Gillpatrick

"After having carefully considered the evidence, the Directors decided and unanimously agreed as follows:

1. That Mrs. Stetson teaches her students, or those with whom she has been holding daily meetings, that the branch Church of Christ, Scientist, of which she is a member is the only legitimate Christian Science Church in New York City; and she teaches her students, or said group of students, not to regard the other branches of The Mother Church which are in that city as Christian Science Churches.

2. That a considerable number of the witnesses whose testimony the Directors have heard exhibit as Mrs. Stetson's teaching an erroneous sense of Christian Science, particularly in regard to the *application of Christian Science to human needs and conditions;* the witnesses whom the Directors have heard being with one exception her students and being a select body of students chosen by her, or a board of which she was a member, to be representative practitioners of Christian Science.

3. That Mrs. Stetson endeavors to exercise a control over her students which tends to hinder their moral and spiritual growth.

4. That Mrs. Stetson endeavors to obtrude herself upon the attention of her students in such manner as to turn their attention away from divine Principle.

5. That Mrs. Stetson practices and teaches pretended Christian Science contrary to the statement thereof in "Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures," particularly by treating persons without their request or consent, and by teaching a select body of her students to do likewise.

6. That Mrs. Stetson attempts to control and to injure persons by mental means; this being utterly contrary to the teachings of Christian Science.

7. That Mrs. Stetson has so strayed from the right way as not to be fit for the work of a teacher of Christian Science.

" After having considered these facts in view of the By-laws of this Church applicable to them, the Directors unanimously determined and ordered as follows:

1.--That the card of Mrs. Stetson be removed from

the Christian Science Journal, and that the trustees of the Publishing Society be directed not to advertise her as a teacher or practitioner of Christian Science without first obtaining the approval of the Directors.

2.--That Mrs. Stetson's license or authority to teach Christian Science be and it hereby is revoked, and that she be and hereby is forbidden to undertake the work of a teacher of Christian Science until her fitness for such work shall have been proved and decided according to Article XII, section 1, of the By-laws of this Church.

3.--That in order to inform Mrs. Stetson of the action now taken by the Directors and to admonish her concerning the things now pointed out by them, the Secretary of the Board shall send to her by registered mail a copy of these findings and orders."

The Board of Trustees proceeded at once to the consideration of the communication from Mrs. Stetson, in the light of what had occurred at the Boston conference, held the week previous. It is proper to state, however, that no authenticated copy of the foregoing "Findings and Orders" was ever filed with the Board of Trustees of this branch church.

Mrs. Stetson's communication to the Board contained the statement that she absented herself voluntarily from the meeting. A member of the Board suggested the propriety of Mr. Strickler and Miss Young absenting themselves from the executive sessions of this Board, while the questions submitted in these communications were under consideration. Mr. Strickler, replying thereto, stated that this pro-

posal met with his entire approval and that he would stand ready to give any information at his command to aid the Board in dealing with the matters before them. Miss Young stated that she was willing to do what the Board of Trustees desired her to do in the matter of withdrawing. Mr. Strickler and Miss Young then withdrew from the meeting.

At this same meeting (October 1st) a resolution was approved by the Board that the Directors of the Mother Church be requested to supply a complete copy of the evidence taken in Boston, for the use of the Board of Trustees of this branch church in the conduct of this inquiry. This resolution was communicated to the Directors of The Mother Church in a letter dated October 1, 1909, which reads as follows:

October 1, 1909.

The Chairman of the Board of Directors, The First Church of Christ, Scientist, Boston, Mass.:

Gentlemen—On Friday last, when six of this Board of Trustees had the pleasure, upon your invitation, of meeting the Board of Directors of the Mother Church informally in Boston, it transpired that a great deal of testimony had been taken from some twenty-five of the practitioners who have been associated with this branch church. This testimony, as outlined by Judge Smith, appeared to be of a serious nature; but as a bare outline of only some of the testimonies was given by him, you will recall that a request was then made for a copy of all the testimonies. Judge Smith said he would rather not let it be given out until further action was de-

termined upon. Since then, action has been taken by your Board, involving one who is not only a member of this branch church, but a member of this Board of Trustees. Therefore, having in view our duty in the premises to properly consider this matter, we now make request that this Board be promptly furnished with copies of the examination of and testimony given (in any manner) by each and every member of this church who was called upon to appear before the Directors in the investigation relating to "the teachings and practices in First Church of Christ, Scientist, New York City," or in any manner relating to the teachings and practices of any of its members.

In view of your recent assurance that it is your desire, as it is surely ours, to come into closer understanding with each other, we feel no doubt but that you will see the wisdom and justice of granting this, under the circumstances, most reasonable request.

Judge Smith said on Friday last, "Let the present occasion be taken as an overture made on the part of the Directors of the Mother Church towards the branch church in New York City. Let nothing in the way of formality, or form, or anything of that sort, interfere with the endeavor to come into closer understanding." Anticipating, therefore, an early and favorable response, we are,

Sincerely yours,

THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF FIRST CHURCH OF CHRIST, SCIENTIST, NEW YORK CITY.

By (Signed) Edwin F. Hatfield, Chairman.
John D. Higgins, Clerk.

This request was not granted, as is shown by their reply of October 4th, which reads as follows:

THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
OF
THE FIRST CHURCH OF CHRIST, SCIENTIST,
NORWAY, FALMOUTH & ST. PAUL STS.
BOSTON, MASS.

Office of the Secretary

October 4, 1909.

The Board of Trustees of First Church of Christ, Scientist, of New York City, No. 1 *West* 96*th Street, New York City:*

Gentlemen—We are in receipt of your letter of the 1*st inst. and regret the attitude which it reveals. Your letter seems to indicate that you think you have no duty to perform unless it be to review and pass upon the action of this Board.*

You have been informed of certain irregular practices of members in your church, disclosed by an investigation conducted by this Board, and these same facts are as open to you as they were to us; moreover, the lamentable conditions which exist and which have existed for a long time are within the personal knowledge of the Chairman of your Board, the two Readers, who are ex-officio members thereof, and many other persons whom we did not summon. What you should do is to obtain the testimony of these people and do your duty. Under the circumstances this Board calls upon you to wake up to the seriousness of the situation, make your own investigation and act without fear or favor.

Very respectfully,

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE BOARD OF DIRECTORS.

By (Signed) J. V. Dittemore, Secretary.

On the same day that this letter was received, October 5th, the Committee appointed to prepare a plan of procedure for the inquiry, made its report, based on the assumption that Mrs. Stetson, Mr. Strickler and Miss Young would absent themselves from the meetings of the Board, in accordance with the action taken on the day the Committee on Procedure was appointed.

The Inquiry was accordingly commenced on this basis, and all the former Reading Rooms practitioners were requested to appear before the Board of Trustees, at the Board Room at 4 o'clock P.M. on October 12th. They all responded at the time and place appointed and were informed of the inquiry and of the wishes of the Board of Trustees in regard thereto, by the reading of the following document:

ANNOUNCEMENT.

"Recent events have imposed upon his Board the duty of inquiring into the conditions and practices that have obtained in this branch of The First Church of Christ, Scientist, Boston, Mass.

"It is requested that during this inquiry you will not discuss with each other, or with any other persons, either the fact of the inquiry being in progress, the facts out of which it arises, or what would be proper evidence in such an inquiry. You are requested also not to discuss the proper action of the Board, but to keep constantly in mind the fact that there is only One Mind, manifested always in each and every idea of God, and that no other mind exists or can appear or express itself through any one connected with this inquiry. Also that each person concerned in this

inquiry is a manifestation of that Mind and is governed by divine Principle.

" Without prejudicing his testimony, any witness may declare the spiritual facts, even when recounting the occurrences under investigation, thus aiding the Board to ascertain the occurrences and to administer any discipline found just and proper, without unduly fixing in consciousness any falsities that may have been believed and declared by anyone heretofore.

" You will be questioned, not only as to occurrences, but regarding the teachings of Mrs. Augusta E Stetson and Reverend Mary Baker Eddy.

" You will all await the further call of the Board, each in the room formerly occupied as a practitioner's office in the church, Miss Colton and Mr. Verrall using the rooms on the mezzanine floor which they formerly occupied. You will each be called to appear individually before the Board. While you await this call, the following books are commended to your careful consideration: The Bible, Science & Health with Key to the Scriptures, by Mary Baker Eddy, Discoverer and Founder of Christian Science, and the Manual of The Mother Church."

Thereupon, Mr. Strickler protested in writing against the Board's proceeding with the inquiry in the absence from the meetings of both Readers. In order to get the benefit, at the outset, of all that Mr. Strickler might have to say, he was called as the first witness, on Tuesday, October 12th. Notwithstanding the protest previously made, Mr. Strickler appeared before the Board and began to give his testimony. Before the meeting of the following day, and before the conclusion of Mr. Strickler's testimony, a second written

protest was made by Mr. Strickler against the further progress of this inquiry, during the absence of both Readers from the meetings of the Board. In order that there might be no doubt whatever as to the regularity of the proceedings, it was deemed best to call a meeting of the Board of Trustees to consider this matter. Such a meeting was held on October 14th, all the members of the Board being present, including Mr. Strickler and Miss Young, the ex-officio members. Thereupon the Board of Trustees appointed a Committee of Inquiry composed of all the members of the Board except Mrs. Augusta E. Stetson, and the two Readers of this branch church who have no right to vote at Board meetings, even though present. The Committee thus appointed was composed of the following persons:

Edwin F. Hatfield, *Chairman*
John Franklin Crowell, *Secretary*
Mrs. Suzanne S. Thomas
Mrs. Isabelle C. Dam
Joseph B. Whitney
Adolph Rusch
Wm. H. Taylor
John D. Higgins

Something should here be said regarding the legality, as well as the propriety of this course. As to the propriety, the members of the Board of Trustees were unanimous in desiring to conduct the inquiry, without either Mrs. Stetson, Mr. Strickler, or Miss Young being present during the examination of the other witnesses, and yet so as to procure all testimony that would lead to a just and righteous judgement. The course pursued accomplished both these purposes. Mrs. Stetson and Mr. Strickler were both fully

heard at the beginning of the inquiry. The Committee then had the benefit of all Mr. Strickler wished to say before proceeding with examination of the other witnesses.

As to the legality ; the by-laws of this branch church vest in the Board of Trustees, and in the First Reader, co-ordinate rights, (Article XI, section 1), in the administration of the church discipline. Either the First Reader or the Board of Trustees may initiate the action with a view to discipline. Mr. Strickler had been in possession for many months of the chief alleged facts upon which this inquiry was initiated by the Board of Trustees on October 1st, only a few days after the Board was officially informed of the things complained of. Having initiated the inquiry, the Board of Trustees had the right to prosecute it according to its judgment. Mr. Strickler mentioned some of the alleged facts to a member of the Board of Trustees in August. That member thereupon informed Mr. Strickler that the matter was a proper one for him (Mr. Strickler) to bring officially to the attention of the Board of Trustees. Mr. Strickler did not then bring the matter to the attention of the Board of Trustees of this branch church, though he attended two meetings of the Board after that conversation, prior to the time when the Directors of the Mother Church moved in the matter. Indeed Mr. Strickler has never brought the matter to the attention of the Board of Trustees officially. It came before the Board by Mrs. Stetson's initiative, taken September 26th, the day she received the letter above referred to from the Secretary of the Christian Science Board of Directors.

Before the appointment of the Committee of Inquiry,

the Board of Trustees considered carefully a phase of the pending question which was of prime importance, though of a preliminary character, namely, the question of the respective jurisdictions of The Mother Church, and of this branch church in respect to the matters under consideration. While the Board of Trustees was duly considering this grave question, not previously raised in the history of this branch church, accusations that the Board was derelict in or oblivious to its duty, were heard on various sides, and from sources which might have been expected to manifest a more Scientific attitude. These accusations were voiced even from the witness chair by persons who are within the jurisdiction of this branch church, and who were at that time before the constituted authorities, sitting in their official character, and therefore representing our beloved Leader, Mary Baker Eddy, and responsible to her and to God for the righteousness of their conduct and judgment. The giving of due consideration to this question of jurisdiction, and to certain constitutional questions connected therewith has enabled the Board and the Committee of Inquiry to see more clearly the way of duty and to walk therein, and thus to avoid trespassing upon the rights of the constituted authorities of The Mother Church, and of individual members of this branch church. This consideration was so helpful to the Board and to the Committee in prosecuting this inquiry, that a concise statement of this phase of the matter seems to be proper at this point.

In her unfailing and ever watchful wisdom, our beloved Leader, Mary Baker Eddy, has organized her Church so that The First Church of Christ, Scientist, in Boston, Massachusetts, has complete and perfect authority in the jurisdiction defined for it in the Christian Science

Manual. Branch churches are also perfectly self-governing within the jurisdiction granted to them by the same Church Manual and by the same authority; namely, Mary Baker Eddy.

It is as imperative that the branch churches protect their rights and perform their duties within the realm marked out in the Manual for them, as it is that The Mother Church officers protect the rights and perform the duties imposed upon them. In this way only can the Kingdom of God and of His Christ be effectually established among men. For either of these authorities to neglect the proper performance of their respective duties, or to trespass upon the province of the other, would be disobedience to our Beloved Leader on the part of Officers, Directors, Trustees, or Readers, whether of The Mother Church or of a branch church.

The duty and the spiritual benefit of obedience are the same in both cases, and the consequences of disobeying are inevitable; whatever may seem to be the relative importance of the duties imposed upon one or the other authority. As this is a branch church, the supreme question confronting its constituted authorities and also its members is, first, to gain a perfect understanding of, and then faithfully to perform its own duties irrespective of what other authorities or persons may or may not do.

Branch churches in their corporate capacity must presuppose the faithful performance of duty by The Mother Church officials in matters concerning only individual members of The Mother Church. Each church must do its own duty in the light of the facts laid before it, and of its

own understanding of our beloved Leader's teaching and practice of Christian Science.

The Directors of The Mother Church have no authority to review the action of a branch church in a matter falling within the jurisdiction of the branch church. The constituted authorities of the branch church have no right to review the action of the Directors of the Mother Church, in a matter falling within the jurisdiction of that church.

Branch churches have no jurisdiction over teaching. Therefore, the question whether any person shall or shall not teach Christian Science cannot properly come before a branch Church.

The authorities of this branch church are bound to judge according to the evidence before them, and in accordance with the law as laid down in the Bible, the Manual, Science and Health, and in Mrs. Eddy's other writings. In the formation of this judgment, the findings and orders of the authorities of The Mother Church cannot properly be taken into account, for judging either in accordance therewith or contrary thereto. The authorities of The Mother Church have no right or power to interfere with the affairs falling within the jurisdiction of a branch church. Neither have the individuals who happen at the moment to be the authorities of The Mother Church any such right, either as individuals or as officials. This is clear from Article XXIII, Sections 1, 3 and 10 of The Mother Church Manual.

Article XXIII, Section 1, on "Local Self Government," reads in part as follows: "The Mother Church

of Christ, Scientist, shall assume no general official control of other churches, and it shall be controlled by none other. Each church of Christ, Scientist, shall have its own form of government."

Article XXIII, Section 3, forbids a branch church to adopt the Manual of The Mother Church, thus compelling them to adopt such by-laws for their own self government as may be necessary or desirable to supplement the provisions of The Mother Church Manual, applicable to branch churches.

Article XXIII, Section 10, on "No Interference," says in part as follows: "In Christian Science, each branch church shall be distinctly democratic in its government, and no individual and no other church shall interfere with its affairs."

Having in view these general principles regarding the respective jurisdictions of The Mother Church and of branch churches and the rules of the Manual applicable to the matters under consideration, the members of this branch church can more easily comprehend the report of the Committee of Inquiry, now to be submitted as the Report of the Board of Trustees.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY.

First Church of Christ, Scientist, New York City.

This Committee was appointed by virtue of the resolutions approved by the Board of Trustees at a meeting held October 14, 1909, all the members of the Board being present; also Mr. Virgil O. Strickler and Miss Ella G. Young, First and Second Readers, respectively, of this branch church. The Committee organized on the day of its appointment, by electing Mr. Edwin F. Hatfield as Chairman, and Dr. John Franklin Crowell as Secretary. The Committee has not ceased since that day to devote itself to the duties that devolved upon it; though the members of the Committee were all preoccupied with their personal and business problems, it was found possible to hold two sessions daily except Sunday. Some sessions were held on Sunday, there being in all thirty-five sessions, during which over 1,000 pages of typewritten testimony were taken. Every member of the Committee was present at practically all the sessions, except Mrs. Suzanne S. Thomas, whose residence is not in New York City, and whose family ties imposed upon her certain duties of an imperative character during the

progress of the inquiry, which made it impossible for Mrs. Thomas to attend the sessions regularly.

The Committee is unanimous in the following statement of facts, deduced from the evidence before it:

I. First Church of Christ, Scientist, New York City, is a loyal branch of The Mother Church, and is an organic part of The First Church of Christ, Scientist, founded by Mary Baker Eddy, and of which she is the perpetual head.

II. Error cannot work through any person to separate this branch church from the Mother Church, or to separate loyal members of this branch church from our beloved Leader or from anyone who is conquering error and manifesting the Christ Mind more and more.

III. This branch church derives its existence and also its rights from the action of Mary Baker Eddy, and recognizes her as supreme in spiritual leadership.

IV. This branch church has grown, in a little more than two decades, from a small beginning to its present proportions, notwithstanding the fact that a number of Mrs. Eddy's students, who were members at its organization or in the early days of its existence, withdrew from its membership, and formed other branch churches in this city, while this branch church was still young in years, few in numbers, and apparently feeble in power.

V. The same character of opposition which manifested itself toward this church through those who withdrew from its membership and formed other branch churches in this city, subsequently manifested itself in

other parts of the country and has widened and intensified itself up to this present time. Proof of this fact is in the possession of this branch church.

VI. This opposition persistently formulated and assiduously circulated false reports regarding this branch church, Mrs. Augusta E. Stetson, and other of its members. This circulation of falsehoods still continues.

VII. These reports were given currency, even in Christian Science circles. When directed against Mrs. Stetson they included charges of personal ambition, personal control, malpractice, hypnotism, mesmerism, etc., even to the extent of disloyalty to the Cause and to Mary Baker Eddy, the Discoverer and Founder of Christian Science, by entertaining the expectation of robbing Mrs. Eddy of her position as the Leader of Christian Science. When directed against this church, these reports were more vague, but were of a corresponding character, such as love of material wealth and power, ambition to overshadow The Mother Church, subjection to personal control, mesmerism, hypnotism, etc. These reports periodically re-embodied themselves during the past two decades, varying from time to time, but never losing their false character of holding Mrs. Stetson, this branch church, or some of its members in error, more or less grave.

VIII. These false reports were engendered and developed by malicious animal magnetism, which is the opposite and the opponent of Christian Science, and they were circulated by persons who did not properly protect themselves against aggressive mental suggestion, as enjoined by our beloved Leader in The Mother Church Manual, Article VIII, Section 6.

IX. The widespread circulation of these unwarranted reports throughout the Christian Science Field, has kept many persons away from this branch church who would otherwise have come to its services and extended the right hand of Christian Science fellowship to its members.

X. Loyal to our beloved Leader and to the Truth of Being, this branch church and its loyal members have fought the good fight of faith, and have not despaired of the day when the members of this branch church will all be recognized by their brothers of other Christian Science churches, as made in the image and likeness of God, and as manifesting the Christ Mind, instead of in subjection to error in its aggressive and hideous forms.

XI. It is the purpose of this branch church to obey the by-laws that have recently been promulgated, also all by-laws that may hereafter be lawfully promulgated, even as it has heretofore obeyed the existing by-laws, as understood by the constituted authorities of this branch church.

XII. Although this inquiry included general conditions prevailing in this branch church, it soon became apparent that the conditions alleged in evidence taken were almost entirely confined to what had been done and said in practitioners' meetings, and to their effect upon the general body of the church. For this reason the hearings were preeminently occupied with the part played by the persons directly participating in these meetings.

XIII. This assemblage of practitioners appears never to have had any formal authorization. It simply grew up out of the common desire of persons similarly

occupied to benefit by regular association for mutual improvement, and we find that there is quite general agreement among witnesses as to what took place in these meetings, but that there is a fundamental difference in the attitude of witnesses toward statements made and occurrences that took place at said meetings. During the past year Mrs. Stetson made numerous mental defences against hostile manifestations toward this branch church, as well as toward herself. With regard to these defences, practitioners appear to have grouped themselves into two classes. Nineteen practitioners consider them as justifiable, defensive declarations in handling error. Four or five now appear to have regarded this kind of defence as amounting to malpractice upon persons whose names were mentioned. To the smaller group of witnesses the use of persons' names without knowledge or consent is the distinguishing mark of malpractice; the larger group insists that self-defence against mental aggression of known personal agency is a legitimate and indispensable method of maintaining their position against mental assassination and as efficient practitioners in Christian Science. The evidence plainly discloses that Mrs. Stetson's teaching and practice were clear on the fundamental differences between treatment and self-defence against aggressive mental malpractice.

XIV. All practitioners agree that the treatment of a person in whose relations to them the aggressive mental attitude is wanting is always conditioned upon the person's knowledge or consent, and that unless this consenting condition is present, the attempt is malpractice. This has been their uniform teaching.

XV. This Committee finds, therefore, that there are these two conceptions extant in this church of what constitutes proper self-defence in the handling of error. A large majority of the witnesses called are positive in their statements:—

(1) That the use of names of absentees was confined to the handling of aggressive mental suggestion in the effort to defend this branch church organization and its members against malpractice from without its fold.

(2) That in no case where mental aggression was wanting, were the names of persons ever used by Mrs. Stetson in handling error in these meetings. Nor did she teach such uses. On the contrary, she taught that such use of names would be unwarranted invasions of the mentalities of innocent persons, and hence malpractice. Although one or two of the witnesses testified that the aggressive mental relation was wrongly assumed by Mrs. Stetson to exist, a majority of witnesses agreed that Mrs. Stetson had ample knowledge of aggressive mental suggestions, attacks or hostile acts on the part of persons where names were taken up by her in defence of this branch church and of herself. In view of the widespread hostility generally pervading the Field, resulting from misrepresentations regarding this branch church, and the activity of disaffected ex-members of the church, the fact of aggressive mental attitude was placed beyond dispute.

XVI. We find that Mrs. Augusta E. Stetson has not manifested resentment nor malice toward any of the Directors or Officers of The Mother Church or the Publishing Society, or toward any other person.

XVII. We find that Mrs. Augusta E. Stetson has manifested in a marked degree the divine love enjoined by Jesus Christ, and by our beloved Leader, which loves enemies, prays for those that despitefully use and persecute you and say all manner of evil against you falsely, for Christ's sake.

XVIII. Personal control, as alleged in our hearings, appears in most complaints to amount to nothing more than advice given against or in favor of courses of conduct, acts or relations that were deemed prejudicial or otherwise to the individual's welfare. The habit had grown, upon the other hand, among some, of bringing to Mrs. Stetson such personal matters as had no reasonable ground for any proper claim to her attention. Practitioners are repeatedly appealed to for advice in domestic and business affairs, and acting on such advice is sometimes characterized as "personal control." In the treatment of patients, such cases have been reported as advising persons to leave their employers, on the ground that the relation stood in the way of the person's spiritual safety or of the patient's recovery. In other cases, it was alleged of some that they were not entirely free in selecting their places of abode, because of being warned against associating with others who were opposed to the teachings of Christian Science, or were known to be disloyal to this church. Several objected to the rule which discouraged absences or lateness at practitioners' meetings as being personal control. There were a few complaints at not feeling free to visit other churches in this city during times of service in our own church. Finally, there was the allegation that undue influence was attempted, although

the allegations are not wholly in accord with statements in other parts of testimony given.

XIX. Practically all of the cases of alleged control were not regarded as objectionable at the time, but appear to have been so viewed later. The attitude of the complainer, in probably no individual case, amounted to an abdication of personal responsibility by reason of any attempt at control, of which the facts are known. On the contrary, the net weight of evidence is preeminently to the effect that so-called control by practitioners and by Mrs. Stetson was welcomed rather than resisted. To persons of spiritual discernment, the intuitive foresight of the competent practitioner, balanced by common sense in regard to human matters, has undoubtedly had the effect in this church of developing the moral fibre and strengthening the moral force of individual character. Instances of actual personal control are comparatively insignificant in proportion to the advantages derived from the mental and moral co-operation of practitioner and patient, or of teacher and student in this church.

XX. This church has always borne its share of the burden of establishing and extending the Cause of Christian Science in this City and State.

Whatever its shortcomings may have been or are now, it has not sulked in its tents when the enemies of the Truth made attack. It has neither been niggard with its energies nor its resources in defending its fellow workers under prosecution for exercising the rights and liberties of the Sons of God in the healing ministry. Notably, as its official records show, it has contributed liberally to such

expensive prosecutions as the White Plains case, in which Mr. John C. Lathrop, of Second Church of Christ, Scientist, New York City, was the defendant in one case, and John M. Goodwin in the other; also more recently to expensive litigation in a neighboring portion of New Jersey, where the local membership was ill prepared to bear the burden alone.

XXI. This defensive service extended to the halls of the State Legislature, to which, whenever occasion required, men and women from among our membership were ready to give unsparing efforts to guarantee to Christian Scientists their Constitutional rights as God-fearing citizens of this State and nation. The battles fought in legislative committees by representatives of this branch church were fought in behalf of the entire Field, because of the lead which this State has long taken in legislative progress on new issues such as are raised by the advent of a new-old religious power in the life of the people. Not boastingly, therefore, but rejoicing in the privilege of service, has this branch church caused public opinion to respect its voice in demanding the recognition of the rights of religious worship and spiritual workers in Christian Science.

XXII. In the relations of the membership of this church with nearby churches in Christian Science, the measure of fellowship, according to evidence presented, has been somewhat limited by the fact that, to no inconsiderable extent has the membership of other local branch churches been made up of persons who, for reasons deemed sufficient to themselves, have withdrawn from this church. Where those reasons were of a protesting character, the conditions of further fellowship were not entirely favorable

on account of the attitude of outgoing members. Finally, there is no doubt that estrangements of membership from this church have contributed a considerable contingent of disaffected brethren to the other branch churches of greater New York and vicinity. Under the circumstances, whatever the causes may have been, it is in evidence that the progress of Christian fellowship was from this particular source not generally strengthened.

XXIII. Among the complaints alleged for withdrawals of disaffected persons, were criticisms of teaching, undue personal control, favoritism, and similar representations of an unofficial character, which were never brought to the attention of the authorities by anyone willing to vouch for them as charges. There is probably no large religious congregation where similar conditions are not constantly present. It must needs be that offences come, and where the standard of spiritual growth and the requirements of individual effort are such as to demand little for self but much for the Cause, there is apt to be a falling away where faith and strength are not vital enough to hold the members in unity of purpose and spiritual power.

XXIV. We find, therefore, that it has been always assumed that every member of this branch church has had ample work within the folds of its own body to occupy the attention of anyone desiring to grow. For that reason, occasional visits to other church services were discouraged. Instead of being a fault to discourage fellowship of this particular character, general religious judgment would no doubt regard it as a proof of fidelity to the vows of membership.

XXV. In more particular respects, one of the chief complaints is that the members of this church have been taught that this is the only legitimate Christian Science Church in New York City. The denials of this allegation compare with the affirmations of it as about four to one. The actual relations likewise disprove the truth of the claim that such is the view accepted in general among our members. On the contrary, there could be no such measure of good will as actually exists, if such a view as that were current in the members' conception of relations with other churches. The Committee therefore finds that any such allegations affecting church relations have not been sustained.

XXVI. In the testimony taken by this Committee a class of allegations occurs of a rather different character from those involving malpractice, personal control and relations to other churches. These allege the existence of wrongful attitudes towards human relations, particularly the marriage relation, the parental relation and the relations of the sexes generally. In teaching the spiritual precepts of the Christian Scriptures, emphasis has been laid upon certain aspects of the human relations with a disquieting effect upon some hearers. But it is impossible to teach Christian Science without some such attendant effects. Indeed, the rule in Christian Science which must govern the efforts of individuals to spiritualize their characters and purify their relations, requires that they emerge out of the consciousness occupied with the minding of the flesh which leads to death, and into that minding of the spirit which demonstrates life eternal.

XXVII. We find that the teachings relating to

the human relations, as such teaching has been given in practitioners' meetings, have not been in any essential respect different from those presented in the Chapter on Marriage in "Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures" by our beloved Leader, Mary Baker Eddy, and in other writings of hers, in her books and periodical articles. There is no evidence presented that Mrs. Stetson's teaching to her classes, in her public addresses in the Church, or in her associations with the congregation, has departed from Christian Science teachings, nor has her influence been anything other than an encouragement to the moral and spiritual improvement of men and women as individuals in their dutiful relations one with another under rightful human arrangement. And the Committee does so find.

XXVIII. The effect of Mrs. Augusta E. Stetson's teaching and example upon persons who are now members of this branch church is proven to be as follows: (*a*) To promote in a marked degree the moral and spiritual progress of the members of this branch church. (*b*) To free great numbers of them from sickness and sin to which they were in bondage previous to their coming in touch with her. (*c*) To enable many of them to acquire such an understanding of Christian Science, such a love and loyalty to Mary Baker Eddy, and such consecration and obedience to God, divine Principle, that they too have been enabled to free many of their fellow men from sin and sickness in their various phases. (*d*) To secure for those who heeded her teaching and example, present liberation from previous personal contagion or control, and an ever increasing exercise of the freedom of the sons of God

—those who realize that they are really made in the image and likeness of Spirit; and are therefore not material, but spiritual; not mortal, but immortal.

XXIX. First Church of Christ, Scientist, New York, is the outgrowth in the main of Mrs. Stetson's efforts toward the establishment of the Cause in this City, in co-operation with persons who have been turned by her influence and that of her students into the path of Christian Science.

No words seem more appropriate than those in the two following letters, one addressed to Mrs. Augusta E. Stetson personally, for placing in the corner-stone of this building; the other addressed to Mrs. Stetson, Mr. Hatfield, and others, when the labors of building this church edifice were successfully ended, and the necessity for its proper protection had come:

Pleasant View, Concord, N. H.

To Mrs. A. E. Stetson:

Beneath this cornerstone, in this silent, sacred sanctuary of earth's sweet songs, peans of praise and records of omnipotence, I leave my name with thine in unity and love.

(*Signed*) *MARY BAKER G. EDDY.*

November 30th, 1899.

Pleasant View, Concord, N. H.
December 3d, 1903.

Mrs. Augusta E. Stetson, First Reader; Gentlemen, Edwin F. Hatfield, Adolph Rusch, William H. Taylor, Steuart C. Rowbotham, John D. Higgins:

Beloved Students—Your telegram in which you present to me the princely gift of your magnificent church edifice in New York City is an unexpected token of your gratitude and love. I deeply appreciate it, profoundly thank you for it, and gratefully accept the spirit of it; but I must decline to receive that for which you have sacrificed so much, and labored so long. May divine Love abundantly bless you, reward you according to your works, guide and guard you and your church through the depths; and may you——

"Who stood the storm when seas were rough,
Ne'er in a sunny hour fall off."

Lovingly yours in Christ,
(Signed) MARY BAKER G. EDDY.

In conclusion, your Board of Trustees desires to assure the Congregation that at all times the interest of this branch church will be fully protected, and that all questions which have arisen in regard to the proper practice of Christian Science in this branch church, will be finally and properly settled, in accordance with our beloved Leader, Mary Baker Eddy's, teaching and practice of Christian Science, before the Board of Trustees of this branch church ceases to take every possible step for the accomplishment of this end.

(Signed) EDWIN F. HATFIELD,
Chairman.

(Signed) JOHN FRANKLIN CROWELL,
Secretary.
For Committee of Inquiry.

The foregoing report was submitted by said Committee to the Board of Trustees on the 4th day of November, 1909, and duly approved by said Board, and ordered presented to the meeting of the Church held on said November 4th, 1909.

(Signed) EDWIN F. HATFIELD,
Chairman of the Board of Trustees.

(Signed) JOHN D. HIGGINS,
Clerk.